



CITY OF FALLS CHURCH

Office of Communications

703-248-5003 (TTY 711)

FAX 703-248-5146

publicinfo@fallschurchva.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Nicole Gobbo

703-248-5210 (TTY 711)

ngobbo@fallschurchva.gov

Hyun June Lee

703-248-5101 (TTY 711)

hlee@fallschurchva.gov

Falls Church City Council Opposes Proposed Marshall-Newman Unmarried Couples Amendment to the Virginia Bill of Rights

FALLS CHURCH, VA. – The Falls Church City Council unanimously passed a resolution opposing the proposed Marshall-Newman Amendment to the Virginia Bill of Rights at its regular meeting on Monday, Sept. 25, 2006. The text of the Marshall-Newman amendment proposes a sweeping ban on legal recognition of all unmarried relationships—both same sex and opposite sex—including a ban on civil unions, domestic partnerships, and other arrangements between unmarried couples of any sexual orientation. The resolution states the amendment would undermine the enforcement of existing domestic violence laws and could adversely affect business partnerships.

"We recognized that the proposed Marshall Newman Unmarried Couples Amendment will have a detrimental effect on the citizens of the City. We felt we should let our citizens know that this broad-sweeping amendment will not only affect gay couples, but ALL unmarried couples. This amendment will take rights away from all Virginia citizens," said Mayor Robin Gardner of why the Council acted on the proposed state amendment. "It is important that, before heading to the polls, voters read the entire amendment and see that this amendment will have a grave effect on the abilities of Virginians to make life decisions regarding ANY type of contract they may want to enter into with anyone other than their spouse."

The proposed amendment appears as Question #1 on the November ballot. It states: "That only a union between one man and one woman may be a marriage valid in or recognized by the Commonwealth and its political subdivisions. This Commonwealth and its political subdivisions shall not create or recognize a legal status for relationships of unmarried individuals that intends to approximate the design, qualities, significance, or effects of marriage. Nor shall this Commonwealth or its political subdivision create or recognize another union, partnership, or other legal status to which is assigned the rights, benefits, obligations, qualities, or effects of marriage."

According to the City Council resolution, the language of the Marshall-Newman Amendment is antithetical with Section 25-46 of the City Code, which prohibits any discrimination based on race, color, creed, religion, age, disability, national origin, gender, political affiliation, sexual orientation or marital status. The Falls Church City Council supports basic civil rights for all Virginians.

To view the resolution visit

www.fallschurchva.gov/government/officeOfCommunications/documents/ResOpposingMNAmdment092506.pdf.

To view all statewide ballot issues and proposed amendments up for consideration this November, visit

www.sbe.virginia.gov.

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